GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6208
ANSWERED ON:06.05.2003
GENE PATENTING
NANDIPAKU VENKATASWAMY

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Data Bank has been set up to identify Genes and help facilitating their patenting;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the number of Genes identified and patented as on 31.3.2003 ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

(a) & (b) : No, Sir; there is no data bank which has been specifically set up to identify genes and facilitate their patenting. However, the Department of Biotechnology in the Ministry of Science and Technology has set up Mirror sites of international genomic databases in the country at Indian Institute of Science(IISc.), Bangalore; University of Pune, Pune; Jawaharlal Nehru University(JNU), New Delhi an Institute of Microbial Technology(IMTEC), Chandigarh. The Databases include Genome Databank(GDB), Protein Database(PDB Plant Genome Databases and Databases and Software hosted at European Bioinformatics Institute (EBI). These mirror sites have been set up to promote the genomic and proteomic research. At present, genes are not patentable as such in India. However, it is only the novel Genes/DNA fragments with some utility are patentable in other countries.

(c) : So far, Indian scientists have identified eight patentable genes out of which two genes have been patented in USA through the Department of Biotechnology.